

Hughes, Babbitt shine in 1A-2A-3A all-star game

By Ryan Howe
Times-News writer

POCATELLO - Despite the close proximity between Declo and Oakley, Tanner Field and Brian Babbitt had never met prior to preparations for Saturday's fifth annual Idaho high school all-star football game at Holt Arena.

But by game's end, the newfound friends ♦♦ "were posing for pictures together along with the other nine players from the Magic Valley representing team Idaho in the Class 1A-2A-3A game.

"I didn't know him at all, I had just heard of Brian Babbitt, big boy from Oakley," said Field. "I was impressed. It was fun playing with all those guys. All the Magic Valley kids bonded."

Those Magic Valley kids left their stamp all over Idaho's 44-6 win over Treasure Valley.

"Once we saw who we had and who they had, we knew from the very beginning we were going to beat them," said quarterback Nathan Hughes of Filer. "We were pretty confident, maybe a little overconfident, but it paid off."

The last time Babbitt played on the Holt Arena turf, he scored four touchdowns in the first half of Oakley's 2007 Class 1A state championship victory. While he didn't get to run the ball on Saturday, he proved he could be just as dominating on the defensive side - even with six more players on the field than he's used to.

"It seems crowded, but it's the same concept as 8-man. There's just more guys to run around," said Babbitt, who will attend Utah State University and is considering walking on to the Aggies football team.

Field and Babbitt joined Carey's Heath Adamson in one of the alternating linebacker platoons. The Idaho defense smothered Treasure Valley all day.

"I knew we were going to do well and probably beat them," Babbitt said. "But I didn't think we'd beat them by that much because both teams are all-stars and talented. I thought it would be a closer game."

Babbitt provided two of the three biggest hits of the day on special teams. Kimberly's A.J. Schroeder had the other, plus Schroeder had an interception in the fourth quarter.

Jaime Folk and Eric Marvin of Kimberly also came up big on defense. Marvin helped force a turnover as Treasure Valley quarterback Jay Bangarter fumbled deep in his own territory, setting up Idaho's second touchdown.

Hughes was Idaho's starting quarterback and alternated drives with Bo Duffin of Aberdeen. Hughes threw for a hair over 100 yards and tossed a pair of touchdown passes in the second half.

"These are the best from all around, I wish we could go travel with this team, it would be so much fun to play with the best," said Hughes, who will play linebacker at Snow College.

Other area players contributing to Idaho's win were Eric Stradley of Kimberly, Ryker Fairbanks from Lighthouse Christian, Rich Mahoney of Declo and Bridger Barrett of Raft River.

In the earlier eighth-grade game, Treasure Valley led Idaho 22-14 in the fourth quarter. Idaho scored a late touchdown, but was flagged for excessive celebration, moving its extra-point attempt back 15 yards. Idaho was unable to convert from there, and Treasure Valley escaped with a 22-20 win. Nine area athletes competed for the Idaho squad.

1A-2A-3A All-State Game

Idaho 44, Treasure Valley 6

Idaho 0 16 21 7 ♦¿♦" 44

Treasure Valley 0 0 6 0 6

Second quarter

Idaho 6 Levi Aldous 9 run (kick failed) 8:51.

Idaho 6 Trevor Spence 1 run (Braiden Jones kick) 7:09.

Idaho 6 Jones 30 field goal 3:41.

Third quarter

Idaho 6 Jones 62 pass from Nathan Hughes (Jones kick) 6:28.

Treasure Valley 6 J.C. Tucker 85 kickoff return (pass failed) 6:14.

Idaho 6 Ethan Radin 58 interception return (Dakota Amy pass from Spence) 4:03.

Idaho 6 Amy 19 pass from Hughes (kick failed) 1:46.

Fourth quarter

Idaho 6 Jared Shively 13 pass from Bo Duffin (Jones kick) 3:14.